

Psalm 139:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Analysis

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea—Wings of the morning (kanfei-shachar, כְּנָפִי־שָׁחָר) evokes the swift, eastward-spreading dawn light—the fastest natural phenomenon known to the ancient world. To ride dawn's light from east to the furthest west (uttermost parts of the sea = westernmost Mediterranean) represents maximum speed and distance. David imagines impossible escape velocity.

Even if we could travel at the speed of light itself, racing the dawn across the planet, we couldn't outrun God. This isn't threatening pursuit but reassuring presence. Jonah tried fleeing west by sea (Jonah 1:3); he discovered the truth of this verse. Geography cannot distance us from God.

Historical Context

For ancient Israelites landlocked in Judea, the sea (especially the westward Mediterranean) represented the edge of the known world—mysterious, dangerous, and distant. Dawn's eastward light racing to the western sea encompasses the entire known world, from boundary to boundary.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What are you running from—and how fast—believing you can outpace God's presence in your life?
2. Like Jonah fleeing to the 'uttermost parts of the sea,' have you tried geographical escape from God's calling or conviction?
3. How does the speed of 'morning's wings' illustrate that no matter how fast you run toward or away from something, God is already there?

Interlinear Text

אֲשֶׁר	בְּאַחֲרֵי	יְה	שְׁמַר	כְּתָפָי	אֲשֶׁר	בְּאַחֲרֵי	יְה	שְׁמַר	כְּתָפָי	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר
If I take	the wings	of the morning	and dwell	in the uttermost parts	of the sea						
H5375	H3671	H7837	H7931	H319	H3220						

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 19:6 (Parallel theme): His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

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